

# Mount Joy Borough Planning Commission

## April 8, 2015 Minutes



The April 8, 2015 Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM, by Chairperson Josh Bower. Commissioners Gault, Sweigart and Melhorn were present. The Mount Joy Borough Zoning Officer, Stacie Gibbs was also present.

### **MINUTES**

**On a motion by Melhorn and a second by Gault, the March 11, 2015 minutes were approved with corrections. *Motion carried 4-0.***

**The Mount Joy Borough Historic Resources PowerPoint presentation was conducted by Steve Gault on behalf of the Planning Commission.**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kyle Miller, 301 E. Main Street, Mount Joy, thanked the Planning Commission for their work on this. He advised that he and his wife moved here because they fell in love with a 115 year old house and its charm. Miller advised that beyond their love for historic resources and their beauty, he has done some research as to what it does for the town. He advised that the Lancaster County document that Gault was speaking of states that towns that keep their historic resources intact, have more visitors, they stay in town twice as long and spend twice as much. Miller advised that he understands that we have had trouble keeping businesses in the Borough. Miller advised that protecting these Historic Resources will allow us to attract more businesses and more folks. He advised that he looks at Lititz that has kept their historic resources which has done wonders for their economy. Miller thanked the Commission again, and hopes that not only does this pass, but that the list expands through voluntary requests.

Brian Youngerman, Councilman for the Florin Ward questioned if the 1940 time frame for the potentially historic buildings is a moving target that is subject to change. Bower advised that date will not change unless the Commission proposes it to change. Gault advised that the 1940 date came from different resources. Gault advised that sometimes it is tough to see what might become historic, and it is difficult to tell if this date will need to be changed in the future.

Kim Brewer, Main Street Mount Joy Manager, advised that the Main Street received \$50,000 for façade grants to go into the downtown. She advised that having this adopted into our code, shows that we care about the infrastructure that is currently here. Brewer advised that if we do not set up things like this to prove that we have value in our infrastructure, Main Street may not continue to receive funds. Brewer advised that these kinds of ordinances are to become a requirement in the future to receive grants. Brewer commended the Commission on their work and advised that they did a great job on the list.

Mike Albon, 29 W. Main Street advised that their property was subdivided over the last 30-40 years. Albon advised that half of the property they do not own now which includes a shed. Albon advised that the shed was part of the original property and he would think the shed is historic, and wanted to know if the shed is included. Gibbs advised that the shed is on a separate lot with a separate owner and address. Bower

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advised that the owner would have to request to be added onto the registry and complete a Historic Resource Request Form.

John Coleman, 53 W. Donegal Street, advised that he opposes designating this house as a historic building. He advised that he purchased the property in 2006 as an investment property. Coleman advised that it is a 2-unit apartment, which he keeps well maintained from an investment standpoint, and he follows all guidelines that the Borough mandates. His goal was to have the income pay for the unit as it builds equity. By putting a lien on the property, with even no demolition would limit his future abilities and decrease the value of the property. The property has a nice yard and depending on the market the property could be demolished, and a nice single family unit could be built. He advised that this is just one of many future opportunities that would be eliminated if a lien was added. Coleman advised that he understands he could go through the process of meeting all of the criteria, but the chances of making it through that process he believes would be slim. He further advised that there is nothing historic about this property. Coleman noted that walls have been removed, all windows and siding have been replaced and all utilities have been upgraded. He advised that the only historic part left is a story. Coleman advised that no one would ever come to the property because it was the Richland Academy, or the school that is noted on the registry. In summary, he advised that he believes this location does not warrant these restrictions, and that if these restrictions are placed on any property owner, he feels there should be some kind of compensation like they do for farms.

Scott Albert, 50 E. Main Street, advised that he appears as a property owner. Albert advised that what he received in the mail did not reference a definition of historic properties to be in subsection C in 270-138, and he advised that he did not have that. Gault advised that definition is from the current ordinance. Gault did not know that when the ordinance was sent out if that definition was also sent out. Gibbs advised that the definition was sent in the first large section. Gibbs advised that should include a definition for historic resources. Albert advised that he does not see it in the packet he received. Albert advised that to define a historic structure or place, you would go back to one of those two standards of looking at the National Register of Historic Places and what the Borough places on their registry. Gibbs and Gault advised that is correct. Albert just needed clarification. Albert advised that his property is on this proposed list and his question is why? Albert advised that his property is more than 75 years old, and then he provided the language that was included on the registry. Albert wanted to know who determined that this property was a historic structure. Albert advised that one building was gutted and made into 4 apartments. So, any historical value there is gone. Albert advised that his office is also in the building. Bower advised that there were two criteria that needed to be met to include a property on the registry. Since this property met two of the criteria, it was placed on the list. Ned Sterling advised that this recommendation came from Vera Albert in the Historical Society letter they provided to the Commission. Albert advised that he and his wife are self-employed and part of their retirement would be when they sell their building. Albert wanted to take a hypothetical look at a situation. Albert then advised that perhaps McDonald's offers ½ million dollars for their property and they would like to accept that knowing that they would have to tear that down. Albert advised that he does not see a definition of interested party in the definitions. Gault advised that would be a discretion of Council whether or not an interested party proves that they have a vested interest in what happens to the property. Gault advised that it can't just be a random person that just does not want it to happen. Albert suggested that the ordinance should define that. Gault thought some of that was defined by the MPC. Albert then advised, for example, in his line of work, he may make enemies and they may line up to object his proposal for demolition. Albert advised that like a lot of people here, he stated that they have spent a lot of money on their property. Albert advised that if you look at all of the criteria to meet under demolition, it would be difficult for the property owner to meet all of these. He asked that we review the criteria and make it more palpable for the property owner. That way if they have an opportunity to sell it, they could. Albert also advised that there is nothing in the ordinance that says who would be the responsible

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party to document or photograph the property. Albert advised that he would assume that would not be the property owner's responsibility. Bower advised that was correct, and there is an attachment that was provided by LCPC that gives guidelines for documentation of the property to be done. Albert advised that he has no problem with that format, it should be clear that it will not be at the property owner's expense.

John Beiler, 201-203 W. Main Street, advised that they do not have a lot of historical things left on the inside. Beiler also advised that they need to fix front door towards Main Street in the near future. He advised water gets in there. He advised that they would like to keep the charm and beauty on the outside. Beiler also advised that he likes the idea of not being limited to what he can do. Beiler further advised that they put new windows in and a lot of upgrades to the building.

Aaron Black, Manager at WR Mills, 19 N. Market Street, wanted to know what the next stages of the Ordinance are. Bower advised that there are several other pieces of the Ordinance to evaluate over the next couple of months prior to present to Council. Bower advised that they are hoping to have something ready for adoption at the end of the year. Black wanted to know how they would see the final draft of this historic section. Gault advised that agendas are posted on the Borough website. Gibbs advised that the Commission could designate that the Zoning Officer resend this section in final form out to those that are on the list again.

### **UPDATES**

The Planning Commission was provided a copy of the Zoning and Code Officer report by email.

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### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**On a motion by Gault and a second by Sweigart, the Planning Commission adjourned. *Motion carried 4-0.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacie Gibbs, Zoning Officer